



# COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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## Notes on Self-Sufficiency: The Neighborly Exchange in Yellow Springs

By Bill Felker

*"I believe that a desirable future depends on our deliberately choosing a life of action over a life of consumption, on our engendering a life style which will enable us to be spontaneous, independent, yet related to each other, rather than maintaining a life style which only allows us to make and unmake, produce and consume." - Ivan Illich*

There is in the suburban village where I live, Yellow Springs, Ohio, a small enterprise called the Neighborly Exchange. It is easily the most revolutionary establishment inside the town limits.

I kept thinking about it off and on last Friday as I sat six hours in a doctor's office being tested for allergies and reading Ivan Illich's radical treatise from the early 1970's, *Deschooling Society*.

The Neighborly Exchange is run by Laurie Dreamspinner, a quiet fortyish woman with streaks of gray in her hair and a medicine pouch around her neck. Her job is the coordination of a service barter network which pools its members' service resources, and facilitates the exchange of those services among those members.

Even though Laurie's exchange has only been in existence for a year, it already has more than a hundred members and offers the following: aikido lessons, appliance repair, candlemaking, child care, computer tutor, cooking, driving lessons, editing and proof-reading, errands, French lessons, haircuts, landscaping, laundry, gardening and yard work, home repair, house cleaning, Latin instruction, massage, mechanical repair, pet care, plumbing, sewing, Spanish lessons, storytelling, transportation, and typing.

The business is revolutionary not because the idea hasn't been tried before (Laurie models her activities on the Time Dollars program started by Edgar Cahn), but because it asks suburbanites to do something they aren't used to doing.

Yellow Springs people volunteer their services all the time, of course, but Laurie says they prefer not to get credit for it. They want their volunteer activities, the sharing of their time or expertise, to be free, no strings attached—not like in the Neighborly Exchange where a one-hour "time credit" is earned for every hour spent on assignment providing a service to another member of the program.

To complicate matters, the typical volunteer doesn't like to ask for help himself. "It's harder for most people to say 'I want' or 'I need' than it is for them to offer to assist someone else," Laurie says. "It seems to put me *down* on the hierarchical framework if I need something, but if I offer to help, it puts me *up* in the framework."

In a place where so many people are professionals, there is an added complication: equality. In Neighborly Exchange all time credits are equal. An hour of pet care is equal to an hour of child care or to an hour of cutting hair or to an hour of cooking or sewing or massage or landscaping or Spanish lessons or legal advice.

To make matters even more challenging to the middle class mind, credit cards and cash are taboo. "This is an organization that facilitates people exchanging *services*," insists Laurie. "Its purpose is to fill gaps and connect people. It can't take the place of the money market, but it *is* a way of equalizing some of the injustices of the money market."

So to the suburban commuter, Neighborly Exchange is a pretty radical concept. Accustomed to being well paid for her professional services, used to paying (and proud that she can pay) for needed services with cash earned from an out-of-town career track position, and occasionally volunteering her time because she simply wants to give something to the community, an average Yellow Springs resident may feel it demeaning or simply unnecessary to join the Exchange network. At least I felt a little like that as I contemplated joining. Until I read Ivan Illich.

In the few hours that it took me to react positively to eight different kinds of molds, as well as to dogs, feathers, corn and milk, Illich convinced me that our society was in the grip of institutions which held credentialism to be the highest good, which not only confused schooling with learning but which deliberately excluded most people from joining a professional elite by placing often insurmountable obstacles of time and money in the way.

And of course if we live in Yellow Springs, we have probably joined that elite by paying our dues and receiving our credentials so that we can drive to decent jobs outside of town and pay people who don't know our names for whatever we want or need.

Neighborly Exchange is revolutionary because it bypasses credentials (and the residual power it gives us to take one hour of our credentialed labor--such as law, medicine, education--and buy five or ten or twenty hours of uncredentialed labor--such as clerical work, janitorial services) and goes straight to the sharing of skills on an equal basis.

The importance of that bypass is not only that it cuts to the core of social injustice but that it also begins to liberate each one of us from the structures which have kept us away from one another and which have put our values, our identity, our learning and our growing in the hands of bureaucratic schools, government agencies and corporations.



*"Important and lasting social change always comes slowly, and only when people change their lives, not just their political beliefs or parties or forms of government."* - John Holt.

The more I think about my recent talk with Laurie Dreamspinner, the more I believe that that kind of barter network is fundamental to self-sufficiency in suburbia. My reasons for this conclusion, of course, have something to do with my ongoing thoughts about the nature of independence as well as with the parallel birth pangs of my social conscience.

I ruminate about all of this in an environment of understandable indifference. The magnitude of our modern interdependence easily promotes a cynicism about institutions and their antidote, self-reliance. The more complex society becomes, the more appliances and electronic equipment we buy, the more processed food and vitamins we consume, the more formal education we and our children need, the farther we drive to work, the less relevant personal autonomy seems.

Still, self-sufficiency is considered a virtue in Yellow Springs, and I and many of my acquaintances will go to great lengths to purchase and keep single-family dwellings and late-model automobiles (the basic symbols of our freedom), and to save enough money for an unfettered and dignified retirement.

Dependence on others is actually the antithesis of success in suburban America. The more material things we possess, the more credentials we have, the more cash we accumulate, then the less danger we run of having to ask for help, of losing status and face, of becoming wards of our children or of the state.

The latest upheaval in our national politics seems to reflect this middle-class obsession with sovereignty. The revolt against welfare appears to be tied to a real scorn for those who can't take care of themselves, for those who ask us for the money we've earned for ourselves with our own labor. There is actually a widespread revulsion and resentment at the idea of people not being able to pay for their own health care or make their own living.

The more dependent we become as a result of technological developments, the more concerned we become with self-sufficiency—that is, a kind of self-sufficiency that isolates us from each other and obscures our real interdependence. As long as that contradiction continues to define the way we live, we will have to nurture self-deception in order to support our illusion of independence.

Until we find new ways to meet our everyday needs, we will slowly grow less capable of compassion and judgement about the status of others who may have less security than we do. We will grow more disconnected from and less sensitive about the instruments, the corporations, and the sweatshops that produce our style and ease. We will, in spite of our best intentions, become more separate, more comfortable, more vulnerable, more parasitic.

The service sharing network is one way of trying to move away from that scenario. It is a way of reconnecting us with each other and each other's

talents, a way of restructuring our private economies, and of learning to be more honest about what we do and who we are.

For more information on Neighborly Exchange, call Laurie Dreamspinner at (513)767-9305, or write/visit her at the WEB Center, 100 Corry Street in Yellow Springs.

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## Children in Community

by Daniel Greenberg

*This article appeared in the first Communities Directory, published by Fellowship for Intentional Community in 1990. The new edition of the Directory will be available in late April from Community Service for \$23 postpaid.*

Well over 3,000 children live in 250 of the North American intentional communities listed in the *Directory of Intentional Communities* published by the Fellowship for Intentional Community. What are the social, economic, and educational experiences of children living in community? During the fall and

winter of 1989-90, I visited 25 and surveyed 219 intentional communities in the U.S. to explore these questions. The points made do not apply equally to all communities. My aim is to present a broad range of issues that individuals with children may want to consider before joining a community, or that a community may want to consider before adding children to its ranks.

In our present North American society, the family arrangement of one or two parents living alone with their children is the norm. Unfortunately, in these settings, children tend to have very little contact with adults who are not either their parents or their teachers. In most intentional communities, however, there is an extended family-like atmosphere, where children and adults alike have ample opportunities to create close, nurturing relationships with people of all ages. Thus a wide variety of role models is available to the children of intentional communities.

In such an environment, the experience of parenting children is far from lonely. An immense amount of emotional support is usually given to mothers and fathers, especially in the first few months of a child's life. Often, in larger communities, pregnancies seem almost contagious, enabling parents with same-aged children to share wisdom and emotional support throughout their children's development.

Even when parents separate or divorce, they are both frequently able to continue living within their community and to maintain close relationships with their children. In such circumstances, children don't have to be right in the middle of the fighting and chaos sometimes associated with separations. In fact, they often get to see their parents slowly become friends again as members of the community....

Given the extended family structure of many intentional communities, it is not surprising that most rear their preschool children communally to some degree. Through sharing childcare and related tasks such as cooking, laundry, shopping, and cleaning, parents (mostly mothers) are freed to pursue activities other than parenting. This freedom also

allows parents and other adults to interact with children more often when they want to rather than when they have to, which tends to greatly enhance the overall quality of adult-child relationship.

In some communities, the opportunity for parents to share responsibilities for childcare with other members is coupled with an expectation to share rights in making important decisions about their children. This may be difficult for parents who are unwilling to relinquish sole authority over their children.

Another potentially negative outcome of community childcare is that inconsistency among caregivers with respect to discipline and expectations may be confusing for children. This can also be a problem in nuclear families, of course; but in community there are more adults interacting with a child, and therefore a greater variety of child rearing practices may be experienced. Such inconsistency is especially likely to be a problem in the early stages of building a community when child rearing may get less attention than more pressing survival needs such as establishing a viable economic and social order.

Even after communities have established their basic physical and socio-economic structures, concerns over the material resources needed to raise children remain. While it may be generally less costly to rear children in community, group childcare and education still takes a tremendous amount of labor and resources that are in short supply and high demand. This situation is especially frustrating in communities with a high turnover rate among families with children. Adults who are not very interested in having children in their community or communities that are struggling to survive, may ask, "Why put all this effort into children when they end up leaving anyway?"

On the positive side, however, there are some definite economic benefits to parent and children living in community. Most income-sharing communities strive toward the ideal of "From each according to ability, to each according to need." In such communities, wives are not financially dependent upon their husbands, nor are children financially dependent

upon their parents. With no purse strings to pull, husbands relate to their wives, and parents relate to their children, more from a position of material equality than from a position of power based on what they can provide. In addition, cooperative living is an economic benefit to single parents who do not have to struggle alone to provide basic necessities for their children and themselves.

America is a mobile country, and this feature of the larger society is characteristic of intentional communities as well. An average family in the U.S. moves approximately once every five years and it is likely that families in U.S. intentional communities move at around the same rate.

The dynamics of turnover are likely different from those in rural and urban communities. For example, in rural communities without a school, families may be tempted to leave when their children reach school age if they are dissatisfied with the values or quality of the local public school system. Members of urban communities have more choices about where and how their children will be educated. Yet, despite this flexibility, most urban communities seem to have more transient populations.

Even in relatively stable communities, adults and children still come and go. In the general case where there is a nurturing and secure attachment with a primary caregiver, the coming and going of people appears to be a positive experience for children. Still, it is difficult when close friends leave, and turnover in intentional communities is generally a source of frustration and sadness for all concerned, just as it is in the wider society.

Though not to the extent that many people believe, children in community often lack exposure to the broader society. This may be more the case in rural than in urban communities, and may be especially applicable to children in small communities where there are few peers with whom to grow up. Children whose formal education takes place within the community rather than in an outside school are further isolated from the mainstream.

A positive aspect of communities being somewhat separate from the broader society is that they can provide safe environments for their children. In rural communal environments especially, children can roam about freely with little fear of kidnapping or abuse. In this sense, communities act like safety zones within the broader society.

In communities with few children, isolation from the broader society further limits the size of a child's peer group. Almost seventy percent of the 219 intentional communities surveyed have 10 or fewer children, while just twenty-one percent have more than 20 children, and only seven percent have more than 50 children.

Having few children in an intentional community seems to be a mixed blessing. On the one hand, children often seem frustrated about there being so few communitarian peers from whom to choose their friends. Some children even seem to long for the sense of anonymity possible in a large school, or at least a large community. On the other hand, having no choice but to associate with a small group of children that is quite diverse in age and personality appears to be a rewarding and stimulating experience for these children.

Of the 170 communities surveyed that have children, only 17 percent have formal educational programs for all of their children. However, 46 percent have some sort of educational programs for some of their children, including elementary or home schooling. Largely due to the immense amount of resources needed (facilities and materials, trained and dedicated people), and legal difficulties in some states, educational programs within communities can be very difficult to create. This is especially true among small communities that do not have enough children to justify such a large expenditure of resources.

As might be expected, those communities with over 50 children were three times as likely to have a community school as were those with fewer than 21 children. In small communities, home-schooling is often a more feasible option.

While communal schools are difficult to create, there are many advantages for communities that do establish them. Through these programs, children can be encouraged to carry on the values and traditions of the community. They can be further protected from undesirable aspects of mainstream society such as prejudice and mass-media values. Student-teacher relationships in community schools are generally based on friendships and understanding developed over many years, and there is usually a high degree of parent and community involvement in such programs. Community schools have more freedom and flexibility to experiment with a variety of educational methods in order to adapt to the changing needs of the children. Some communities accept children from outside the community, which can enrich the school and community both socially and economically.

Over eighty percent of the intentional communities surveyed that have school-aged children send some or all of their children to public or private schools outside their communities. For these children it is often a struggle to adapt to the very different peer culture and value systems of these schools. Consequently, some communitarian children may have problems feeling accepted in off-land schools. In addition, children from communities may occasionally feel victimized by peer prejudice resulting from the negative publicity some intentional communities have received. In such cases, parent involvement with the school system can be important in helping children feel comfortable and, at the same time, building positive public relations with the wider community.

Whatever the schooling arrangement is in a community, much of the children's education happens informally. Simply by living in an intentional community, children gain hands-on experience with politics, economics, and group process. Through apprenticeships with adults in their community, children can often acquire a wide variety of practical skills such as gardening, food processing, cooking, construction, and auto mechanics.



Many community children have unusual opportunities to travel widely and to become involved in community projects. These activities range from helping hurricane victims in South Carolina to harvesting oranges in Florida to visiting and developing relationships with other communities all across the continent. Children in community learn skills needed for self-sufficiency, gain a sense of group spirit and self-esteem, and are generally well prepared for life in the community and the broader society.

If there is anything that research on the informal education of children in community has consistently borne out, it is that these children are exposed to a LOT of social interaction. In addition to all the interaction with community members the children of communities that are fairly well-known have opportunities to share experiences with visitors from around the globe. Early independence and autonomous behavior are highly valued in most communities and, as a result, communal children generally learn to talk and reason quite early.

Most children in our society have very little exposure to the world adults live in. In community, however, the joys and struggles of adult work and life are not hidden from children. They may witness a birth one day and help with a funeral another day. Children see adults building houses, building relationships and political structures—things that are all too often mysterious during childhood. Children in community have frequent opportunities to come to terms with the realities of life and learn to share, endure, and live with others.

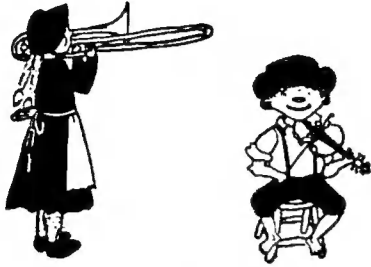
In conclusion, communities provide environments for their children that are safe, supportive, and social. While formal educational programs are difficult to create, simply living in community provides many educational experiences for children.

How well do intentional communities prepare children for the future? A community is a microcosmic society, and can therefore provide children with a broad understanding of group process and adaptation to change. The most important product of intentional communities is process itself, learning how groups



can work and grow together in joyful and humane ways is as important as getting things done. Given the pace at which our society and world are changing, empowering children with the skills needed to effectively work and grow with others may be one of the most significant contributions that communities can make to their children and to our world's future.

*Daniel Greenburg recieved his PhD in Child Psychology from the University of Minnesota. He is a consultant in this area and is currently traveling in Europe and India.*



### **Report of Ken Norwood's Address 1994 Conference on Affordable Housing**

by Elizabeth Lotspeich

The 1994 Community Service conference, "Building Community with Affordable Housing", hosted Ken Norwood, AICP planner and architect, as this year's keynote speaker. Ken is the founder of the Shared Living Resource Center in Berkeley, California. The center focuses on ecological housing design and cooperative community living. Ken not only shared with us his architectural vision of community design through drawings and slides, but was invaluable in imparting insights gleaned from his own personal experience in community living.

Beginning on Friday night Ken set a tone of clarity, aesthetics and depth about our topic by defining community. Community, based on the Latin word *communitus* meaning common ownership. This common ownership extends from resources to responsibility for communication. He feels that our society and family structure are breaking down from a lack of common ownership in responsibility, re-

sources and communication. Fragmentation and alienation of our families is not community.

"So how do I as one individual begin to go about the process of creating community?" was a question asked several times during the conference. Without hesitation Ken responded, "Eating!". Meals taken together are a wonderful way to begin establishing an atmosphere of mutual nurturing and trust among people of all ages.

Cooperative community living is based upon a hands-on reality of daily shared responsibilities. What better way to begin than by simply inviting your neighbors to a well-prepared potluck meal. The building of trust between people is an essential step in creating community. We can only share our material and natural resources with one another when we have a foundation of human caring, nurturing and trust in place. Until then, speaking of housing design, building and zoning codes, transportation and daily living schedules is futile. Ken believes starting with small but achievable steps will lead to building trust among people. A shared meal is a grace to be honored.

From a more concrete and technical point of view Ken broadened our ideas of community design with his renderings and slide presentation. His first slide brought us to the beginning of our Earthly existence when all there was, was matter. Out of this common matter we were then created.

Ken believes that the first communities of people were based upon sharing of resources. His approach to community is based upon this prototype of early community lifestyle. Food preparation and meals were the central core, private family dwellings extended around the core with a semi-public living space on the outside. Surrounding the entire living area were forests, natural waterways and greenbelts.

Greenbelts are the strength of a society. He defined them as woods, fields, wetlands, orchards, etc...But agricultural business and mono-cropping create yet another breakdown for society -- the loss of our natural lands. Streams become polluted with pesticides,

migrant workers are used as laborers; hence, we are led to the demise of small towns and family-owned farms.

Ken envisions a renewal of society and healthy family life through community. Small family farms that grow a variety of crops, multi-service businesses providing for people of mixed incomes and extended family clusters with common gardens, walkways, bike paths, playgrounds and passive solar greenhouses are, in short, a total integration of economic social and agricultural needs, developed for the entire community by the community.

Ken asked us to consider the alternative of taking existing city neighborhoods and shopping malls and turning them into small sustainable communities. He cautioned us against utilizing our precious rural areas and destroying more greenbelt lands. He presented us with two models to think about for city modified community living.

The Davis Community in Berkeley, California, is an example of a pre-existing older neighborhood redesigned to create a sustainable community. It created common areas for living and for the sharing of resources and responsibilities. By enlarging the houses it developed space for extended family clusters. Reduced car trips, shared transportation and cooking, all add to a quality of life that supports social well-being, varying economic strata and better use of the environment.

Many city shopping centers are going bankrupt and sitting vacant. Ken described a second model of community redesigned from shopping center ghost towns. "Create community multi-service and work/living spaces with a light rail system interconnecting everything. There could be farmers' markets, cultural agencies, rooftop gardens, and just a few small parking lots. We would not need separate cars for everyone with everyone making separate shopping trips."

When asked by a participant how the automobile manufacturers would feel about fewer cars, Ken responded that undoubtedly they would not like the

reduction of consumer use of their product. However, he went on to say, an alternative to automobile manufacturing could be light rail production. Ultimately, manufacturers will build what consumers demand. The choice is up to us.

All in all, through Ken's many slides and drawings he gave us a detailed outline of what a sustainable community could look like. Through his narrative he charmed us with his vision of quality life where children could interact freely with other adults and elders instead of a TV, where freshly grown food is prepared and shared through common meals, where privacy and social needs are both provided for and alternative to rural land use for future community development is explored.

This presentation was well blended with two other supporting workshops: *Strawbale House Construction* presented by Richard Cartwright and Mary Meyer and *Exploring Group Communication* presented by members from New Leaf Community in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The entire conference was housed in the woodsy center of Glen Helen. As a group, we participated in meal preparation and clean-up, singing and square dancing and enjoyed with gusto Victor Eyth's now famous banana "ice cream". On Sunday a meditation was offered. Afterwards a group evaluation of the conference and future topics were discussed. Our conference group of over seventy participants consisted of a diverse group of people ranging in ages from 18 months to 94 years. In just two days the group developed from strangers sharing ideas to a more intimate gathering of people sharing heartfelt emotions.

Having the experience of sharing Ken Norwood's vision of community while actually participating in a "conference community" was confirmation for myself that sustainable community is vital to our human preservation and future evolution. Community is not an ideal developed by the 60's back-to-the-land movement but a viable lifestyle that existed throughout the history of humankind and is still yet quite achievable.



## An Adventure in Community

by Ernest Morgan

Throughout a long life I have had many adventures in community. One of the first was in my business.

In 1926, while still a student at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, I started a small printing and publishing business, the Antioch Bookplate Company (now Antioch Publishing). I continued in the management of that business until I retired in 1970.

My aim in that business was not just to make a living, but to practice a way of life. As it grew, over the years, I sought to make it into a community. Each new person I hired I took on a tour through the plant and the office, introducing him or her to each of the other employees, and explaining how everything worked. The procedure was much the same as would be followed when a new guest arrives at a party.

Each staff member was given a key to the building and permission to use any of the equipment within range of his or her skills, for any personal or non-profit work that might be wanted. When I happened to be in the office on an evening or a weekend, I observed that staff members were frequently coming and going, pursuing their special interests.

I recall, when one of our people left to take a better paying job in another organization, she returned after a time. "Money isn't everything!" she said. In fact, it was quite common for people who left the organization to return to it later. One problem we had was that people who were retired because of age were forlorn at being separated from the group. We solved this by arranging special part-time jobs for them, which would maintain their association.

An interesting sidelight: women were given equal opportunity with men, both in management and production jobs. Likewise, we employed African-Americans, Jewish refugees from Europe, Japanese-Americans evacuated from the West coast -- and even a couple of Native Americans. Despite the eth-

nic mix I was never able to detect any manifestation of discrimination or prejudice. The reason for this wholesome acceptance was, of course, the sense of community which prevailed in the organization.

The employees shared actively in the management of the company, and in the risks and profits of the operation. But that is another story. Suffice it to say, the company thrived. In the context of active community, work can be an occasion for happy fellowship -- not just for earning money. To work just for money, as seems to be the prevalent pattern in our society, is a personal tragedy, akin to slavery. But it doesn't have to be that way.



### Review of 5th Annual Conference on *Towards a Sustainable Society*

*From Sustainable Society Action Project, Inc.  
December 1994 Newsletter*

by Alan R. Harrod

On Sunday, November 13th I attended the 5th Annual Delaware Valley *Towards a Sustainable Society* Conference, in Meyerson Hall at the University of Pennsylvania.

After a welcome to the University, Dr. Ernest Cohen and his wife Elaine, Convenor of all five conferences, provided some background for the organization and the rationale for this particular conference. This was followed by a keynote address by Dr. Anthony R. Tomazinis, chair of the Department of City and Regional Planning, University of Pennsylvania, on *Sustainable Cities*.

Following these introductory remarks, two of the regular conference planners gave presentations: Illy Sobel speaking on transportation, especially the electric car, and Ajay Goyal who discussed sustainable energy.

Robert Thomas discussed how to live in a sustainable manner in Philadelphia, speaking as both a practitioner and a designer of such key items as passive and active solar energy, the use of heavy and "movable" insulation and design flexibility in order to promote cooperative living and working.

Dr. Elmer Miller of Temple University brought an anthropological perspective to the audience. He has been studying first-hand a foraging society in the Chaco plains of tropical northern Argentina. One of my major interests is that of value systems which Clyde and Florence Kluckhohn compared across different cultures in the American Southwest. "Man's [sic] relationship to nature" was one of the Kluckholms' five major values which he called "value orientations". Western society tried to dominate nature while this gatherer/hunter society tries to live with nature in a cooperative manner as parent (nature) to child. Dr. Miller brought up the question of whether modern society can incorporate such reciprocal relationship to nature. It would seem that we can continue to misuse and abuse nature at our own risk.

Dr. Robert McCain of Drexel University identified three aspects of sustainability: (1) biophysical, (2) social, and (3) economic. Although the second was discussed least, I feel that it is an intriguing concept which warrants further discussion.

The final presentation was by Dr. Etienne van de Walle of the University of Pennsylvania's Population Research Center. He augmented his discussion of population and sustainability with some informative graphs. Immigration is now the major source of population increase in the United States.

The conference ended with those conferees still there asking questions of the presenters. Unfortunately, one speaker who did not stay was Dr. Elizabeth Mackenzie, whose talk all too briefly stressed the need to develop small communities to help encourage diversity. This idea is strongly supported by most, if not all, of the conference planners and it would have been interesting to have delved into this aspect in more detail.

There were two important announcements at the conference. Diane Soifer is interested in reviving the local chapter of the World Future Society, a former sponsor of the conferences. Also, an announcement was made for an action coalition with the tentative title "Alliance for a Sustainable Future".

## Alliance for Sustainability

by Ernest and Elaine Cohen

As noted by Alan Harrod, there is local interest in doing more for sustainability. Jack Heckelman called a "pre-organization" meeting for the Alliance for Sustainability. Elaine and I are on an ad hoc subcommittee to define an action program for the Alliance, if it comes into being. We want to make sure: (1) that the Alliance does something useful, not just talk, (2) that it does not duplicate existing programs in other organizations and (3) that the Alliance does not pull activists away from ongoing projects in other organizations.

Several items have been brought forward for consideration by this ad hoc committee: (1) Creation of music, art and drama for sustainability. Pete Seeger has advanced many causes by supporting them with his music, and why can't the same be done for sustainability? (2) Some form of educational project, up to and including founding a school, to help change the many sub-cultures in America to include elements required for a sustainable future. (3) Reaching out to organized religion, and inspiring religious leaders to incorporate sustainability themes in their sermons and rituals.

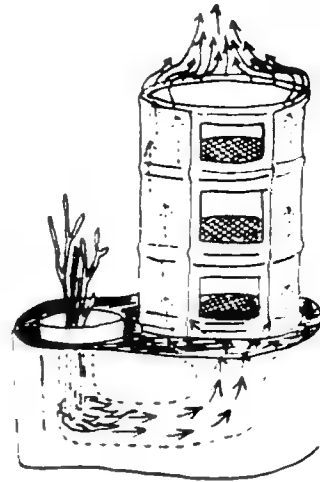
Many of the presenters noted the need for deep culture changes in order to evolve a sustainable future. Religion, or quasi-religious ceremonies, are an essential part of almost every culture. One of the disappointments is that there were no ministers or other religious leaders attending this conference. In order to reach out to organized religious groups, we have been making a lot of phone calls and visits in the Delaware Valley. We have located such groups as: *Center for the Celebration of Creation*, under the

Rev. Hal Taussig. Now we are trying to determine which are "soft" religiously-oriented environment groups, and which are ready to make sustainability a religious imperative.

The word "sustainable" was used in several different ways at the recent Delaware Valley Conference. When people spoke of a "sustainable business" or a "sustainable community", they seemed to have a rather short-term view, i.e. something that can continue for a few years, or maybe a decade. When major changes in the social economy are forced on us by fuel shortages, etc., these organizations will probably collapse. However, when agronomists speak about "sustainable agriculture" they mean farms that will remain at or above present levels of productivity for the foreseeable future. This seems to be the sense that SSAP must use the term. If our social economy can only persist for as long as humans can utilize fossil fuels in large quantities, it is inappropriate to call that a "sustainable future".

One of the hard choices that comes with the long view of sustainability is that there are not enough fossil fuel resources to maintain the affluent countries' extravagant use of energy. Therefore, it will be impossible to add impoverished countries to the list of those who build their prosperity upon the availability of cheap fossil fuel. This puts sustainability in direct conflict with 'social justice'. However, a world in which a large number of poor people feel cheated may be nonsustainable due to social violence and war. This dilemma requires considerable further study. In the meantime, SSAP is trying to change the culture within the affluent countries. We can only hope that the poorer countries will try to emulate this new pattern, not the old patterns of cheap energy.

As noted above, an educational institution is one way of changing culture. This can't be done within the public school system, because (in a "chicken or egg" dilemma) the general public is not yet ready to deal with these ideas in the tax-supported schools. What do you think?



### Aprovecho Research Center

by Dean Still, coordinator

Aprovecho is a center for research, experimentation and education on alternative technologies that are ecologically sustainable and culturally appropriate. We have three areas of interest: Sustainable Forestry, Organic Farming and Appropriate Technology. We do research in these subjects and teach classes to interns and students, both foreign and domestic. We are also consultants doing most of this work in other countries.

The center works to develop energy-efficient and nonpolluting inventions that reflect the most current research but which are designed to be made in most any country. The technologies are incorporated into everyday life at the Research Center. By using these tools, we hope to become expert in their operation and to facilitate critique and development.

The Research Center is a forty-acre farm located in a beautiful valley six miles west of the small town of Cottage Grove, Oregon. Our staff includes a gardener, a builder, a forester, two engineers, a researcher and an office manager. Normally there are six interns and a couple of teaching assistants on site as well. We try to live from the produce we generate

as much as possible and we share a deep commitment to the philosophy of voluntary simplicity. Living simply enables us to put more of our time into research and frees us from some of the worries that are a part of living in an overly consumptive society.

The Research Center does consulting, maintains a library for research and technical inquiries, conducts courses, and publishes the information developed within Aprovecho. A few of our current projects are: looking into dry farming techniques, learning more about horse logging, follow-up of a very low-cost photovoltaic system for interior lighting in Mexico, developing a more efficient solar desalinator and finishing up our development of a low-cost, easily built wood fired or solar refrigerator for medical clinics without electricity. We have also just completed documenting "The Aprovecho Summertime Cooking System" which is in booklet form and is available for a donation of five dollars.

We are a membership supported organization and encourage you to join us in this work. Dues are \$30 per year. Members receive our informative newsletter describing research and the schedule of classes, etc. Members may also take most classes for free or at a reduced rate. We also encourage anyone to apply to the internship program to participate in original research, help run the farm, learn about forestry, etc., for three-month periods. Internships cost \$300 a month which includes room and board.

For more information call or write to: Aprovecho Research Center, 80574 Hazelton Rd., Cottage Grove, OR 97424; 503/942-8198.



### **Greenhouse Experiment: An Alternative School for True Community**

by Donald F. Cuddihee, Sr., Architect and Doris M. Cuddihee, Consultant for Culture

The problem we see is that we are living out beliefs that prompt us to act only as individuals, apart from

our neighbors. We make decisions, not across the back fence, but in front of TV with messages from strangers of the media who eagerly perpetuate beliefs favored by the rich and powerful.

Our middle class is being decimated by rules favoring the military and multi-national corporations. Americans feel unprotected from their leaders, exploited by profit-hungry corporations, alienated from neighbors and saturated with propaganda. The air is heavy with unrest.

The problem exists because false promises of economic determinism are uncritically accepted. Beliefs of machismo, rugged individualism, nationalism and hedonism have formed us as a "me first" society rapidly moving toward "get my share before it runs out".

If we continue toward absolute doubt, society will revolt and violence will prevail...or...the growing ranks of poor will be forced into urban backwaters, the will to survive lost, the ability to survive gone.

Architects can introduce ideas that promote face-to-face associations yielding honesty, integrity and goodwill. But this is not enough. We need a place to recreate myths that allow our finest, most humane selves to emerge. We need skills to help us bond, organize and communicate, express ourselves artistically, remain faithful, forgive and reconcile, decorate shelter, respect the earth and earn a living at home. Greenhouse experiment is that learning place, a seedbed to nurture and cultivate skills and awareness in hope that present problems will be reversed and replaced by virtue, compassion and honor...that our society will evolve to a higher plane. Once true community is set in motion it will have tremendous power for good.

*The complete text consists of 23 hand-lettered pages with architectural illustrations for context to discuss element relationships in "Greenhouse Experiment".*

For more information write to: Don and Doris Cuddihee, 305 Middle Brook Rd., Greer, SC 29650-3306.



### Book Review

*Downwardly Mobile for Conscience Sake*, edited by Dorothy N. Andersen. 204 pp., Tom Paine Institute; available from Community Service for \$13.00, P&H included.

*We Gave Away A Fortune* by Christopher Mogil and Anne Slepian with Peter Woodrow. New Society Publishers; available from Community Service for \$18.00, P&H included.

**Both books together available for \$28.00, P&H included.**

by Jane Morgan

*If the world were merely seductive, that would be easy. \ If it were merely challenging, that would be no problem. \ But I arise in the morning torn \ between a desire to change the world, \ And a desire to enjoy the world \ This makes it hard to plan the day.*

— E.B. White

I decided to review these two books together because their themes are similar. Both books give stories of wealthy people who chose to give up all or part of their inheritance, or earnings from business, for "Conscience Sake" to promote worthy causes to help society and the environment or to live more simply "so that others may simply live".

Dorothy Andersen's book is composed of ten chapters written by ten people about their life struggle with their growing convictions about the unfairness

in our society, and what each as an individual can do about it. Many of the authors in *Downwardly Mobile* are from poor or lower-middle-class backgrounds by our Western standards. This perhaps makes the book more useful to the general public struggling with concerns of conscience about money and life styles. The book ends with a long list of books on related subjects.

Christopher Mogil's and Anne Slepian's book is made up of 16 short interviews with wealthy people dealing with the same problems. These interviews are interspersed with chapters to challenge the reader to consider one's own concerns about whatever money one has and how it can best be used to help bring about a more just and sustainable society.

In reading both books, I was surprised to find I knew some of the authors and interviewees personally or by reputation, as many of you readers will be also. Ram Das, Millard Fuller of Habitat for Humanity, and Ben Cohen of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Co. will certainly be known by reputation and through the news media to many readers. These are among the 16 interviewed in Mogil's and Slepian's book. One person, Charles Gray, appears in both books.

In Mogil's and Slepian's book the fascinating interviews with people who gave away their inherited fortunes, or money they acquired through their business, appear in short chapters interspersed with 4 brief chapters on such topics as political and social concerns, personal and family issues about wealth, and how to take part in the world by sharing power and privilege. In addition, there is an appendix which includes questions for reflection, exercises, thumbnail biographies, resource list, etc. There is a great deal of real help in this book for those people truly seeking how to be most useful in the world and how to support their values with their money and time.

Though most who read these two books are probably not millionaires, many of us are well off financially and probably all of us are by world standards. Consequently, any of us with social concerns and consciences will find these books challenging and in one

way or another useful in helping us decide what to do about our own financial and value dilemmas.

*No ray of sunshine is ever lost \ but the green it awakens into existence \ needs time to sprout \ and it is not always granted \ for the sower to see the harvest. \ All work that is worth anything \ is done in faith. --Source unknown.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Co-op America's National Green Pages™

The Co-op America Business Network is the largest association of socially and environmentally responsible businesses in the world. The Co-op America Foundation publishes the National Green Pages™ each year to feature the country's most outstanding progressive businesses. The Green Pages is a convenient, reliable listing of 1400 of the most innovative "green" companies in the U.S. It contains such well-known businesses as Deja Shoes and Ben & Jerry's, as well as many smaller businesses, such as Community Service, Inc.

Consumers who use the National Green Pages can be assured that their products and services are coming from companies which care about people and the planet. Over 100 categories of socially and environmentally responsible businesses are listed. The companies produce everything from electric cars to tree-free paper to futons filled with fiber made from recycled soda bottles. Many of the companies employ the homeless or give apprenticeship training to "at-risk" youth from America's inner cities.

According to consumer advocate Ralph Nader, the National Green Pages is an "essential tool for consumers who want to put their money where their values are every day."

Copies of Co-op America's National Green Pages are available for \$5.95 (including S&H) by calling 800/584-7336, or sending a check to: The Co-op America Foundation, 1612 K St. NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006.

## Job Openings The Institute for Community Economics

The Institute for Community Economics (ICE) is a national community development organization promoting economic justice through community land trusts (CLTs) and community investment. It helps communities develop the tools and institutions needed to regain control of their land, housing, capital and other economic resources. ICE provides technical assistance and financing to community based non-profit housing development organizations serving lower income people.

The **Loan Officer** is responsible for aspects of loan processing and monitoring including: process initial inquiries, assess loan proposals, monitor active caseload, underwriting, conduct related administrative tasks. Qualifications needed: strong financial skills, great attention to detail, communication/analytical skills; ability to digest/organize large amounts of material; ability to work well cross-culturally, knowledge of non-profit housing development, and willingness to work collaboratively with others. Compensation: \$22,000 - 28,000. Excellent benefits.

The **Administrative Assistant** is responsible for maintenance of donor/literature sales records; participation in donor solicitation/editorial work; maintenance of mailing lists and management of mailings. Qualifications: positive mental attitude; commitment to ICE's mission and to excellence; maturity in dealing with people of different cultures, social levels and economic conditions; understanding of and experience with database/word processing computer programs; attention to detail; interest in aiding ICE's efforts to become multi-cultural; knowledge of WordPerfect, Microsoft Excel, Donor\$; fund raising experience.

The **Administrative Assistant/Receptionist** is responsible for reception of calls, mail and visitors for staff. Administrative duties include photocopying, typing and data entry, maintenance of files, office management tasks, maintenance of supplies. Qualifications: telephone etiquette; ability to deal well



with people; familiarity with word processing; ability to produce accurate work; attention to detail; meet deadlines; interest in aiding ICE's efforts to become multi-cultural; knowledge of WordPerfect and Lotus 123. Compensation \$21,000 - \$21,500. Excellent benefits.

*For more information or to apply, send resume and cover letter to: Carol Lewis, Director of Administration and Personnel, ICE, 57 School Street, Springfield, MA 01105. Applications will be accepted until position is filled.*

### Readers Write

As always, I greatly enjoyed the latest issue of the newsletter. Thanks for sharing valuable work with the readership!

*Carroll English, Stelle, IL*

Another excellent number of Community Service Newsletter. Thanks. It was lovely to have a visit from John [Morgan] a few weeks back. Some friends he met here just visited Raven Rocks and came back *inspired*. All best wishes to you.

*Helen Zipperlen, Kimberton, PA*

I am the secretary for the Chicago Cohousing Network....I plan to mention your newsletter in a future newsletter of ours as a valuable resource for people involved in the community building process....The features in your newsletter have been consistently good and relevant to building real community over the years. I appreciate your effort.

*Hal Mead, Chicago, IL*

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### Membership

Membership is a means of supporting and sharing the work of Community Service. The basic \$25 annual membership contribution includes a subscription to our quarterly Newsletter and 10% off Community Service-published literature. Larger contributions are always needed, however, and smaller ones will be gladly accepted. Community Service is a nonprofit corporation which depends on contributions and the sale of literature to fund its work. All contributions are appreciated, needed and tax-deductible. Due to added postage costs, foreign membership, including Canada, is \$30 in U.S. currency.

### Have Your Friends Seen The Newsletter?

Please send the names and addresses of your friends who might enjoy receiving a sample Newsletter and booklist. If you wish specific issues sent, please send \$1 per copy.

### Editor's Note

We welcome letters to the editor (under 300 words) and articles (700-2000 words) about any notable communities or people who are improving the quality of life in their communities. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish the article returned. The only compensation we can offer is the satisfaction of seeing your words in print and knowing you have helped spread encouraging and/or educational information.

### Address Change

If there is an error on your mailing label, or you are moving, please send the old label and any corrections to us. It increases our cost greatly if the Post Office notifies us of moves, and you will not receive your newsletter promptly.

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*You can tell when your Community Service membership expires by looking at the month and year in the upper left corner of your mailing label. Please renew your membership now if it has expired or will expire before 3/95. The annual membership contribution is \$25. We do not send individual reminders to renew.*

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